

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

ST PETER'S SQUARE

Auteur(s) : Historic England <https://historicengland.org.uk/>

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Name: ST PETER'S SQUARE

County: Greater London Authority

District: Hammersmith and Fulham (London Borough)

Parish: Non Civil Parish

label.localisation: Latitude: 51.491887
Longitude: -0.24404825
National Grid Reference: TQ 22003 78455
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1000837
Date first listed: 01-Oct-1987

Details

Early C19 private garden for the surrounding houses of St Peter's Square, which was preserved as a public garden in the early C20.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The residential development of St Peter's Square was built in c 1825 on land belonging to George Scott of Ravenscourt Park (Cherry and Pevsner 1991). The garden of St Peter's Square was laid out between 1825 and 1830 and it is thought that J C Loudon was at least influential in its design, if not directly responsible for it (Faulkner 1839). The rectangular garden included a well and an engine house in the centre. The engine was used to raise water from a deep artesian well and pumped water to the neighbouring residents.

In 1912 the garden was threatened with redevelopment and, after pressure from local residents, the local authority bought the site, simplified the path layout and planting, and in 1915 opened it as a public garden. The OS map of 1915 shows the garden as an enclosed space without paths or vegetation and probably records the interim stage between private and public garden.

The site continues (2003) as a public garden.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING St Peter's Square is located c 50m north of the Great West Road and c 250m to the north of the River Thames at Chiswick Eye. The c 1ha level rectangular site, orientated north to south, is enclosed within iron railings set on low stone walls. The garden is bounded on all sides by the roads of St Peter's Square.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES There are four entrances to the garden of St Peter's Square, one on each side. The north entrance has been moved from the centre of the northern boundary (OS 1867) a few metres to the west. The low double gates, which match the pointed, early C20 iron railings around the garden, open onto a short (6m) length of tarmacked path. To the east of the main entrance is a small railed enclosure with a small C20 building set aside for storage. The entrances in the centre of the west, east, and south sides are guarded by single iron gates of the same design as the main gate.

PRINCIPAL BUILDINGS The houses of St Peter's Square (listed grade II) were built as part of an early C19 development which included St Peter's church (listed grade II), shops, inns, and stables. The houses all face onto the central garden but are

separated from it by the road. The stuccoed, three-storey houses were built in groups of threes. The two end houses of each group project forward and have pediments. The architect of the houses is uncertain but Edward Lapidge, the architect of St Peter's church, or J C Loudon have been suggested (Cherry and Pevsner 1991).

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS A perimeter shrubbery, set within the boundary railings, surrounds the garden. The shrubbery is largely planted with evergreens and has scattered mature trees. Encircling the garden, which is largely laid to grass with scattered mature trees, is a perimeter path which runs in a straight line around the south, west, and east sides, but now (2003) curves at the northern end. The north and south ends of the lawn are dominated by single mature horse chestnut trees, that to the south being surrounded by a circular path, connected to the southern perimeter by two paths forming a triangle of lawn with a rose bed to the south of the tree. This path arrangement remains in its C19 form but at the north end the paths have been simplified around the chestnut tree, omitting the circular path. The mid C19 OS map (1867) records that the path system included a northern perimeter path as well as a set of diagonal paths enclosing a small triangular lawn, mirroring the path layout at the southern end of the gardens. All the paths were decorated with shrub beds making a series of enclosures rather than the open aspect of the current (2003) garden. Shrubberies are also shown in the circular lawns at the north and south ends of the garden and on the 2nd edition OS map of 1897 single trees are shown, probably the existing horse chestnuts.

A path leads from the west to the east entrance, with C20 variegated holly standards to either side, and in the centre of the garden the path circles a flower bed with a bronze statue of a runner in the middle. The bronze statue (listed grade II) is set on a base of Portland stone and faces north. The statue was presented to the Borough by the family of the artist, William Blake Robinson, who made the statue and lived and worked for many years in the area. The statue was erected in 1926 and stands on the site of the engine house and artesian well. The 1st edition OS map of 1867 shows the engine house set within an oval rather than circular feature, and to the west and east there were two paths to each side forming small triangular beds planted as shrubberies. The C19 path arrangement was simplified in the early C20 and the present layout has a single path leading west and east from the central feature and no paths leading north and south connecting the central feature with the paths around the horse chestnuts.

REFERENCES

T Faulkner, *The History and Antiquities of the Parish of Hammersmith* (1839) P D Whiting (ed), *A History of Hammersmith* (1965) B Cherry and N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: London 3 North West* (1991), p 219

Maps OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition surveyed 1863?7, published 1867 2nd edition published 1897 3rd edition published 1915

Description written: May 2000 Amended (CB): January 2003 Register Inspector: LCH Edited: March 2003

Legal

This garden or other land is registered under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 within the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens by Historic England for its special historic interest.